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Contractor appointed to build shopping complex



An artist's impression of how the Banbury Gateway development could look

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WORK will begin on the Banbury Gateway retail complex in August after a new contractor was appointed.

McLaren Construction has been assigned to build the Banbury Gateway park at the Wildmere Industrial Estate, near Junction 11 of the M40, by site owner LXB Retail Properties Plc.

Work on the site, at Acorn Way, is due to begin in August and will include the construction of stores for Marks & Spencer, Next and Primark.

The centre is due to open by the end of 2015.

McLaren will first demolish the building of motorsport firm Prodrive as the firm is moving to new larger premises in Banbury in July.

It is thought that between 800 and 1,000 jobs will be created by the development of the new retail park.

Jon McCarthy, development principal at LXB, said McLaren were the "preferred contractor" for the job.

He said: "We are happy to be working with them."

Mr McCarthy confirmed work should be starting at the site by the end of the year but said a price had yet to be agreed with the construction company.

By Helen Wright

Mike Atkinson, projects director at McLaren, said: "We are delighted to be involved with it."

Sean Woodcock, mayor of Banbury, said: "It is always important that businesses want to invest in Banbury. It is good that they are staying in the town and that they want to take on the Gateway."

But he also expressed concern about the effect on town centre trade.

He said: "I do still think that there are serious questions to be asked about the implications that it may have on the footfall in the town centre."

"There are an awful lot of people asking those same questions and I do feel it is important that these questions are asked and answered to alleviate people's fears."

Banbury MP Sir Tony Baldry said: "Banbury Gateway is intended as a regional shopping centre, maximising Banbury's geographical location on the M40."

"Many of the stores there will be tending to sell items which won't necessarily be able to be bought in the town centre so, for example, Marks & Spencer will be retaining its existing store in Castle Quay, while opening a new store at Banbury Gateway."

"The Gateway project creates jobs for Banbury in two ways. Firstly, retail jobs at the Gateway, and secondly, the development of Banbury Gateway will now enable Prodrive to move to a new and larger site and continue to be one of the leading engineering and manufacturing businesses in Banbury and the region."

The Gateway development will involve building 290,000 sq ft of retail and leisure space, which will include ten shops and three restaurant or cafe units.

The site was given planning permission in March 2013.

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■ Queen's birthday list recognises efforts of charity workers to civil servants

Regal roll of honour

OXFORDSHIRE'S great and good have been recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

Citizens across the county were given titles for their contribution to their communities.

Among them was firefighter and station manager Gary Mattingley who won a British Empire Medal. The award was for protecting communities from flooding after coming up with two new systems to deal with flood water



Assistant Chief Constable Brendan O'Dowda

By Banbury reporter

in February. The 46-year-old suggested using a binding hose that acted as a flood barrier. This, combined with his idea of using a high-volume pump, is now known as the "Oxford Method".

The Bicester-based resident said: "I was absolutely shocked and overwhelmed when I found out about the award.

"I came up with the idea but it was my colleagues who implemented it."

Meanwhile, Thames Valley Police Assistant Chief Constable Brendan O'Dowda has been awarded the Queen's Police Medal in recognition of his distinguished service over the past 32 years.

He is the first South East Regional Assistant Chief Constable with responsibility for Serious and Organised Crime and Counter Terrorism.

A former Oxford City Commander, Mr O'Dowda, 48, joined the police cadets aged 16 in 1982 and has served as a detective in every rank.

Mr O'Dowda served as the Oxford City Commander in the rank of Superintendent, and was Oxfordshire Basic Command Unit Commander in the rank of Chief Superintendent.

He lives in Kidlington and is married to Nichola, who recently retired from her post as executive assistant to Chief Constable Sara Thornton.

They have four children: Torran, Bryony, Jade and Callum.

Mr O'Dowda said: "I'm knocked out by this. "All I have ever wanted to do since the age of 16, when I joined the cadets, was to protect the public, make a difference and lock up the bad guys.

"My wife, Nichola, has been my stalwart and my children have kept me grounded.

"I did my probation in Oxford so I have a big allegiance to Oxford city and I'm rooted in Oxfordshire."

The Queen's birthday honours are bestowed every year to people in the Commonwealth.

They include Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE), for people with a major local role in an activity.

The MBE, Member of the Order of the British Empire, recognises a "significant achievement or outstanding service to the community".

Other Oxfordshire winners were –

KNIGHTS BACHELOR:

- Professor Colin Brian Blakemore, FRS. Director Centre for the Study of the Senses, School of Advanced Study, University of London. For services to Scientific Research, Policy and Outreach. (Oxfordshire)
- Professor John Bernard Pethica, FRS. Chief Scientific Adviser National Physical Laboratory and Physical secretary and vice-president, The Royal Society. For services to Science. (Oxfordshire)
- Professor Richard Rustom Kharsedji Sorabji, CBE.

Honorary Fellow Wolfson College Oxford and Professor Emeritus, King's College London. For services to Philosophical Scholarship. (Oxfordshire)

CBE:

- Professor Martin Biddle, OBE. Archaeologist. For services to Archaeology. (Oxfordshire)
- Sonny Leong. For political service. (Oxfordshire)
- Professor Lesley Ann Page. President Royal College of Midwives. For services to Midwifery. (Oxford)

OBE

- Mrs Amanda Sara Cooper. Director of Information, Thames Valley Police. For services to Policing in Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire. (Wallingford)
- Mrs Anne Kelaart, DL. For services to the Rural community in Oxfordshire. (Nettlebed)
- Professor Polly Roy. Professor of Virology London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. For services to Virus Research. (Oxfordshire)
- John Andrew Simpson. Chief Editor Oxford English Dictionary. For services to Literature. (Cheltenham, Gloucestershire)

MBE

- Robin Aitken. Co-director Oxford Food Bank. For services to Vulnerable People. (Oxfordshire)
- Thomas David Cairns. Co-director Oxford Food Bank. For services to Vulnerable People. (Islip)
- Shaun Nicholas Hughes. Team Leader Ethiopia, Department for International Development. For Humanitarian services in Ethiopia. (Oxfordshire)
- David Snowden. Managing director Pristine Condition. For services to Health and Safety at Work and for charitable services in Oxfordshire. (Henley on Thames)

BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL

- Anthony James Betteridge. For services to Basketball. (Abingdon)
- Ronald Stanley Bridle. For services to the communities in Goring Oxfordshire and Streatley, Berkshire. (Oxfordshire)
- Mrs Carole Chalton. Day Support manager, Abingdon Alzheimer's Club, Oxfordshire. For services to Older People. (Abingdon)
- Mrs June Geraldine Keep. Fundraiser, Churchill Hospital. For services to Kidney Patients in Oxfordshire. (Wantage)
- Miss Janice Veronica Markey. For services to the community in Harwell Oxfordshire. (Harwell)
- Mrs Helen Elizabeth Stewart. For services to Neighbourhood Planning in Thame, Oxfordshire. (Marlow Bottom, Buckinghamshire)

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Firefighter and station manager Gary Mattingley



Donor plea goes out to teenagers

YOUNG people in Oxfordshire are being called on to donate blood to help improve supplies across the county.

Over the last two years, there were 3,094 donors aged between 17 and 24 in Oxfordshire, accounting for 14.5 per cent of the county's 21,267 donors.

Just 755 of those were under the age of 19.

One of those young donors is 17-year-old Matt Cooke, from Kirtlington.

He said: "It can save a life and it's easy.

"It's a bit weird – but all it takes is a pin-prick in your arm."

By donating, the Marlborough C of E School student has done more good than just giving his own blood, he inspired his father – Rob

– to begin donating again.

Mr Cooke, 53, said: "I donated in about 2000 but stopped when we moved to Oxfordshire.

"The problem is that should you get out of the habit, you just forget about it. When Matt signed up I thought I should do it too." The video producer said: "I did wonder if I would be too old to give blood again and if it was going to be a hassle, but it was very simple – no big deal."

Across England and North Wales, people donate around 1.8m units of blood each year, which adds up to 846,000 litres or 186,094 gallons.

Some blood types are more needed than others, like O Rh negative – the universal blood group – and B Rh negative.

While there is not currently a shortage, supplies are dropping lower than they should.

Mr Cooke said: "Matt's grandfather, Peter, had a rare blood type and in the 50s he was once called out of the cinema to donate. Can you imagine that?"

Jon Latham, assistant director for donor services at NHS Blood and Transplant, said: "We're issuing a 'call up' for more to come forward because we know blood donation falls off the to-do list during hot weather and summer holidays, as well as big public events like the World Cup."

Volunteers can give blood as long as they are fit, weigh over 7st 12lb (50kg) and are aged between 17 and 66. blood.co.uk, or call 0300 1232323.

Community sentence follows child sex assault

A MAN has been given a community order for sexually assaulting a nine-year-old boy.

Paul Biggs, 22, of The Penn, Over Norton, near Chipping Norton, was found guilty of the offence last month. The offence happened on September 1, 2007.

The boy cannot be named for legal reasons. Biggs, who has learning difficulties, was 16 at the time.

A jury at Oxford Crown Court cleared Biggs of one further count of sexual assault, two counts of inciting a child to engage in sexual activity, and one count of rape.

Sentencing him last Thursday, Judge Patrick Eccles said: "Sexually touching a child may have very bad consequences for them in later life. Nobody knows how they will feel about it."

"That is why it is taken very seriously by the courts."

"Had you been convicted of all of the offences, then you would have been sent to prison. That is not happening to you but this is serious enough for a community order."

He added: "You were only 16 yourself and the court recognises because you have significant learning difficulties you might not have

appreciated this type of sexual experimenting could have had consequences for the young boy you touched."

He was given a 12-month community order, with a supervision requirement, and must do 100 hours of unpaid work.

He must also sign the sex offenders' register for five years and pay £300 towards costs.

■ Oxfordshire county council launches £27,000 'free boxes' scheme

Doggy bags handed out to cut restaurant waste

RESTAURANTS around Oxfordshire are being given free boxes so diners can take their leftover food home.

Oxfordshire County Council says thousands of pounds are wasted in the county every year through food being thrown away.

And to prevent food ending up in the bin, the county

By Damian Fantato

council is now distributing hundreds of eco-friendly boxes to restaurants around Oxfordshire.

David Nimmo Smith, the county council's environment chief, said: "Food waste is a serious problem. For every meal eaten in a UK restaurant, almost

half a kilo of food is wasted – through preparation, spoilage and what's left behind on the plate.

"This waste hits restaurants' bottom lines, diners' pockets and comes at a massive cost to the environment."

The county council says that UK restaurant food waste totals 600,000 tonnes per year or 21 tonnes per restaurant, or the

same as five small African elephants.

Each participating restaurant will receive 250 free "take me home" boxes as part of the £27,000 scheme.

At the moment there are 35 restaurants taking part but the county council hopes to increase this to 100.

It has set up a dedicated website so diners can find out

more about the scheme and see which restaurants are taking part.

Those in the Cherwell area include: Mason Arms, Banbury Road, Swerford; Pinto Lounge, High Street, Banbury; The Horse and Groom, Milcombe; The Red Lion, The Green, Adderbury; The Milk Shed, Manor Farm, Weston-on-the-Green; Otters, Market Square, Deddington; The Sun Inn, High St, Hook Norton; The Unicorn, Market Square, Deddington, and The Oxford Arms, Troy Lane, Kirtlington.

One of the restaurant managers said: "It is a great idea to minimise waste. I grew up in Australia and have lived in the USA and the concept of people being able to take food home is quite common there."

To find out the complete list of restaurants that are taking part, visit: toogoodtowaste.co.uk/oxfordshire

Probe is launched over race complaint

THAMES Valley Police has launched an independent review after an Oxfordshire police officer made a complaint of racial discrimination.

The force has now reached a settlement with Banbury-based PC Jim Davies, who is an English Romany Gypsy.

In a statement, Thames Valley Police said: "This review will be conducted independently and will involve a review of existing policies and procedures to ensure Thames Valley Police serves all of its communities and ensures that any racial stereotyping or outdated practices and procedures are amended or removed."

"Thames Valley Police is pleased that these matters have been brought to its attention."

"It will not tolerate any form of discrimination towards any minority group and strives to operate fully in compliance with good practice in relation to diversity and equality, both within the force and externally insofar as it best serves its communities, including the Gypsy Roma Traveller community."

PC Davies and the newly formed Gypsy Roma Traveller Police Association will be assisting the process.

Police did not disclose the details of the settlement but confirmed it was not financial and the policeman did not seek any financial compensation.

The force did not comment on when the review might be completed.

The food-waste boxes being handed out to restaurants in Oxfordshire

OX67864



Fire hits rail commuters

COMMUTERS travelling home from London's Marylebone station early this week faced the station being shut "until further notice", after a fire destroyed part of a signalling cable at the weekend.

Chiltern Railways closed the station, with services from Oxfordshire only running into West Ruislip.

A spokesman said commuters travelling home from the capital through High Wycombe could get to the station via the London Underground's Central Line.

The spokesman said: "We may be able to start some trains at Wembley Stadium."

"Damage from the signal cable fire was more extensive than first thought and repair work will need to continue."

Passengers were told to use their Chiltern tickets on the Underground to and from central London.

The tickets can also be used on First Great Western, which operates a service from Oxford to Paddington, and CrossCountry services.

Fewer child arrests

THAMES Valley Police arrested 3,808 children last year, a drop of 69 per cent compared to 12,288 arrested five years ago.

The figures were obtained by the Howard League for Penal Reform. Its chief executive, Frances Crook, said: "It is encouraging to see that Thames Valley Police are making significantly fewer arrests of children than they were in 2008, thanks in part to our effective campaigning."

"Most police services in England and Wales have developed successful local initiatives that resolve issues quickly and cheaply, involve victims in the justice process and, crucially, avoid criminalising boys and girls."

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InBRIEF

Police hunt purse thief

■ A WOMAN'S purse was snatched out of her hands while she was in Banbury. At 8.40pm on Monday, June 9, the woman was walking away from the Co-op store in Ferritton when a man snatched her purse and ran off. The thief was described as being white, in his mid-20s, 6ft tall and of slim build. He wore a black hooded top, black bottoms, black trainers and carried a rucksack. A man matching this description was believed to have been seen outside the Co-op around 45 minutes before the theft took place. The purse is a black leather Bailey purse, decorated with a purple design, and contained cash, bank cards and a bus pass. Contact the police with any information.

Shop raided

■ CIGARETTES were stolen by two thieves who removed a window pane to get inside a Cropredy shop. The burglary at The Bridge Store in Red Lion Street happened last Thursday at about 3.30am. Thames Valley Police said the raiders escaped in a vehicle.

Meet the new champion for county's academies

THE man who will take responsibility for the county's academies has said he will "stand up" up for schools.

In September, Martin Post will take up the role of a regional schools commissioner – one of a number of new positions set up by the Department for Education across the UK.

He will be responsible for Oxfordshire as well as north west London and the south central region.

Mr Post will monitor academy school performance and will be able to step in when there are problems. He will also give final approval to any plans for new academies.

The Government said his job would also be involved in

Government intervention plans for under-performing academies, recruit academy sponsors and "pause" the expansion of struggling academies.

Regional school commissioners will also be able to consider academy requests to change their admissions arrangements.

A headteacher board, made up of five or six local heads, would also be created to hold him to account.

Mr Post said: "What difference will parents and pupils notice once I take up my post in September?"

"First, they will have a local person speaking up for academies in their area.

"Secondly, I will take swift action when schools are not performing and I will be fighting in the parents' corner when they need support.

"Finally, I will be able to take local concerns and raise them at a national level. Just recently, I was in London discussing my priorities with senior ministers. We will work closely together."

Academies are state-maintained but independently-run schools, set up with the help of outside sponsors.

They can either be "converted" or "sponsored".

There are 12 academies in Oxfordshire that are currently sponsored and a further 44 schools which have converted to become academies.



Regional schools commissioner Martin Post

■ Figure 'appropriate' for interim executive's four-month-long post

MP defends NHS payout of £105,000

By Oliver Evans

BANBURY'S MP has defended a £105,000 NHS payout to an interim chief executive for four months work.

Conservative Sir Tony Baldry said the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) payment was "appropriate".

Mr Wilson got £105,000 to £110,000 – it would not reveal the exact amount – for December 10 to March 31. He was brought in to turn around the organisation, launched on April 1 as part of a national shake-up aimed at involving GPs more.

It decides where most NHS cash is spent and avoided a £6.9m deficit at the end of 2013/14 after hospital bosses agreed to write off some bills.

Sir Tony said: "Before Ian Wilson arrived, OCCG was heading for a significant deficit which would have been of no benefit to anyone locally.

"During the time he has been in post as far as I can see he has managed to turn the OCCG around to end the year in a surplus and he has been paid appropriately for that task, turning around and sorting out an organisation with a multi-million pound budget."

Oxfordshire Labour MP Andrew Smith said the salary – equivalent to at least £1,363 a day – was to get OCCG out of the "financial mess" from a "wholly unnecessary reorganisation".

Full-time chief executive David Smith will take over on a pay scale of £120,000 to £150,000.

County Conservative MPs David Cameron, Ed Vaizey and Nicola Blackwood had yet to comment.

The OCCG said interim pay could be "significantly higher due to the difficult nature of the work".



Sir Tony Baldry

DIY home scheme gets £16.6m boost

A PROJECT for 250 self-build homes has had a £16.5m boost earmarked from a council.

Cherwell District Council plans to build the DIY homes across 26 sites by March next year in a project to help people get on the housing ladder.

Homes are built to a shell and then the buyer gets a discount for finishing it off.

As part of the initiative, they will learn basic building skills – such as carpentry, plumbing and tiling.

Initially, the council was planning to team up with partners to fund £9.5m of the overall capital costs, but now has now decided to give more money to the project.

A £3m Homes and Communities Agency grant has already contributed to the scheme.

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■ Firefighters simulate car crash and cut volunteer from vehicle

Crash demo aims to foster safety on road

A TEENAGER was cut out of the wreckage of a car crash as firefighters worked to set him free, but it was all in the name of road safety.

Jack Flemon was stretched away from the mangled vehicle after officers from the Blue Watch at Banbury Fire Station cut off the roof of the vehicle. But the 19-year-old, who attends Banbury and Bicester College, was not a careless driver – he was a volunteer in a demonstration about road safety.

The Foundation for Learning and Life student from Hardwick said: "The firemen asked for volunteers and there was a fireman with me telling all the details of what you would do if you were the first aider. They cut the car roof and then they put a neck brace on me and a protector for my face. It was really interesting.

"The neck brace felt tight. The firemen and work as a team to get the people out of the car looked after me. The firemen were very reassuring and they did it quite quickly."

By Rachel Bayne

He added he "hoped to learn to drive" and the session had made him think about road safety.

The demonstration at the Banbury Fire Station was part of the Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service's road safety week.

Firefighters from the Blue Watch at Banbury Fire Station led the hard-hitting exercise on Tuesday, June 10

Fire risk manager of Cherwell and West Area Kerry Blair said: "We set up a mock road-traffic collision to look at the possible consequences. It was to talk through a real-life situation that hopefully none of them will go through.

"We simulated a crash and we talked the students through how we would treat them medically. We took off the roof of the car.

"We also touched on general road safety. We spoke with them about pedestrians. We did a little bit about

cyclists and the need to be safe, be seen and wear helmets.

"The impact of seeing it, hearing it and being that close to it, makes people realise how dangerous some of these accidents are. That it could be them. It is really high impact."

In 2012 there were 28 fatalities on Oxfordshire's roads and 279 people suffered serious injuries as a result of collisions. There were also 1,951 people who suffered slight injury as a result of a collision.

Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service's road safety manager Mick Clarke said: "It is everybody's responsibility to make our roads safer and I would like to encourage everyone to be aware of the role they play in making our roads safer for all road users.

"It doesn't matter if it's a cyclist; a motorcyclist; a driver or a pedestrian: they all should play a significant part in making Oxfordshire's roads safer and help to ensure the safety of other road users."



Firefighters cut the roof of a car to 'rescue' 19-year-old student Jack Flemon

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■ NHS group warns of 'unsustainable' costs

The weighty cost of obese NHS patients

THE number of obese people in Oxfordshire needing specialist transport to get to hospital is set to rise by ten times in less than ten years.

The number of overweight people needing extra help to get to hospital stood at 91 in 2010/11. But health bosses predict that by 2019, 900 people a year will need dedicated ambulances to ferry them to hospital.

As previously reported, free patient transport for the least infirm, such as certain cancer patients, is set to be axed to focus on those "in most need" like obese people and wheelchair users.

By Oliver Evans

National Obesity Forum spokesman Tam Fry said more needed to be done to tackle the "obesity epidemic".

He said: "The Government has failed. It has pushed on to Oxfordshire the responsibility of cleaning up a mess they couldn't clean up in 20 years."

Health chiefs are facing a yearly bill of more than £100,000 to transport obese people.

They have warned that 75 patients a month would need specialist ambulances and

equipment in five years' time – one of the reasons for planned cuts to hospital transport.

Each severely obese patient costs an average of £129 to transport, so if 75 were seen a month as expected by 2019, this would result in an annual bill of £116,100.

Just five people needed help in April 2010 – the year the county got its first specialist ambulance – but this had risen to 44 by March.

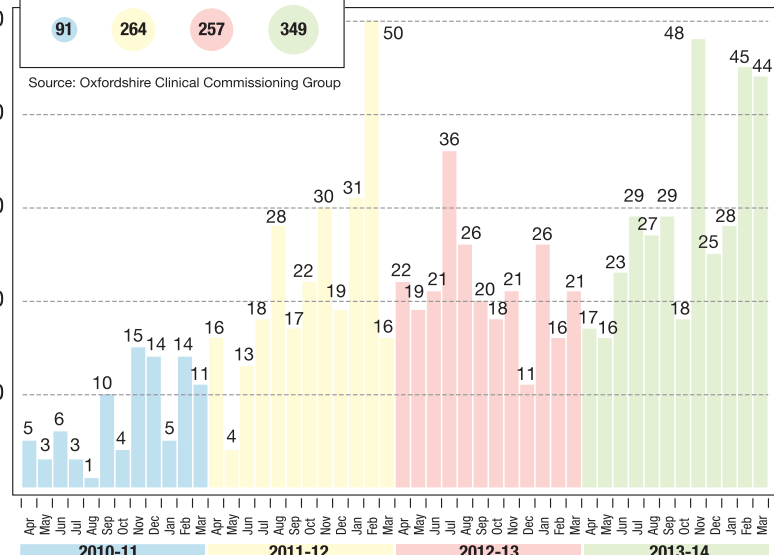
Regular ambulances take patients weighing up to 20 stone but specialist bariatric ambulances can take those up to 55 stone.

Annual number of bariatric PTS journeys

2010-11 2011-12 2012-13 2013-14

Source: Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group

Number of Bariatric journeys per month, April 2010 – March 2014



Number of bariatric patients requiring NHS patient transport services

Dr Rebecca Cooper, the consultant on public health at Oxfordshire County Council responsible for promoting healthy lifestyles, said: "The cost of obesity to society in general is well documented and this is why it is a priority for public health teams up and down the country."

"In particular, links between obesity and other health problems, both physical and mental, result in greater demand for other health services."

An Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group report said: "The projected growth in demand for more complex patient

transport journeys underlines our position that there is an increase in demand that cannot be sustained under the current or future budgets without a review."

In February, the group revealed that 60.7 per cent of 875 adults surveyed in Oxfordshire by Sport England were classed as overweight or obese.

And figures from weighing children in primary schools found about 12 per cent are overweight.

Firefighters have had to be called in to assist paramedics in getting medical treatment to more than 40 overweight patients in the last five years.

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■ Concern as pupils miss lessons

Absence rate revealed for the county

MORE than 2,000 secondary pupils missed at least 11 days of school in the autumn term.

The Department for Education has published school absence rates for the first academic term, which showed 6.7 per cent of pupils at state schools in Oxfordshire had missed a long period of school time.

Oxfordshire is the fourth worst in the South East, against a national average of 5.9 per cent.

However, at primary school level, only 3.4 per cent missed a similar amount of school days, meaning the county has an

By Sophie Scott

absence rate of 4.7 per cent – the same as the national average.

Nationally, the percentage of pupils absent during the autumn term for 22 or more sessions (half a day) fell from 10.3 per cent in 2009.

Of the 7,379 four-year-olds who started school in September, the county had an average absence rate of 5.4 per cent – slightly higher than the national average of 5.3 per cent.

There are 72,645 children at state schools in the county, of which 30,389 attend secondary school.

Oxfordshire County Councils' education chief, Melinda Tilley, said: "This is on our radar. We do have a system for keeping an eye on it."

The Liberal Democrat spokesman for education, John Howson, said that with a large number of secondary schools now being academies, there was little the authority could do to improve the figures.

He said: "These figures are only for one term, but it is a key period for teaching and last winter was mild. So schools need to examine why absence is so high and ensure it doesn't affect educational outcomes."



Dramatic new start for stage-struck girl

AN 11-YEAR-OLD girl has been awarded a place at a prestigious theatre school.

Sibford School pupil Libby Griffiths, pictured, has won a spot at Redroofs Theatre School in Maidenhead, where former pupils include Kate Winslet and *Downton Abbey's* Joanne Froggatt.

Her father Peter said:

"This is a fabulous opportunity for Libby. She will be sorry to leave Sibford, where she has been a pupil since 2010, but at the same time she is very excited about what the future may hold."

She has appeared on stage at the Oxford Playhouse in George Orwell's *1984*, as well as a documentary film on the Discovery Channel.

Sibford headteacher Michael Goodwin said: "One of our Quaker sayings here at Sibford School is 'Live adventurously' and I think that Libby has grasped this message with both hands."

"We wish her all the best and will be following her future career with interest."

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InBRIEF**Railway delays follow blaze**

■ TRAVELLERS faced disruptions on Chiltern train services on Sunday after a cable fire at London's Marylebone station. The station was closed after two metres of signalling cable in a nearby tunnel burned away. Passengers who travelled on the line from Birmingham, which runs through both Banbury and Bicester, were affected. Both they, and those on the line from Aylesbury via High Wycombe, finished at West Ruislip. Services from Marylebone to Aylesbury started at Harrow-on-the-Hill, and trains heading to Birmingham started at West Ruislip.

Volunteers plea

■ ARCh – the Assisted Reading for Children charity which operates in the county's primary schools – is appealing for volunteers. People are being asked to help out with reading sessions for one-and-a-half hours twice a week during the school day. Full training and travel expenses are offered. For further information visit archoxfordshire.org.uk or phone 01869 320380.

IF YOU HAVE ANY
BANBURY STORIES,
CONTACT THE NEWSDESK
ON 01865 425500

InCOURT**Verdicts from magistrates' courts around the county**

■ **STEFAN-IOAN LUPULIASA**, 24, of Cromwell Road, Banbury, admitted shoplifting perfume worth £39 from Debenhams in Castle Quay, Banbury, on May 12. Fined £260, a £26 victims' surcharge, and £85 costs.

■ **DAMIAN STANKIEWICZ**, 33, of Oxford Road, Bodicote, admitted failing to comply with an order by a PC to leave High Street, Banbury, and not return within 24 hours on May 17 and again on May 18. Fined a total of £40 and told to pay a £20 victims' surcharge.

■ **ANTHONY WINFIELD**, 49, of Balmoral Avenue, Banbury, admitted using threatening, abusive words or behaviour or disorderly behaviour likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress, at Banbury United Football Club, Station Approach, Banbury, on April 25. Fined £160 and told to pay a £20 victims' surcharge and £85 costs.

■ **PAUL WHEELER**, 37, of Newland Place, Banbury, admitted stealing jewellery from Bretch Hill, Banbury, on April 11. Community order made with alcohol treatment and supervision requirements. Told to pay £22.70 compensation, a £60 victims' surcharge, and £85 costs.

■ **STUART MOORE**, 38, of Alkerton, near Banbury, admitted speeding at 38mph in a 30mph zone in Stratford Road, Wroxton, on October 16. Fined £80 and told to pay a £20 victims' surcharge. Licence endorsed with three points.

■ **LEON CATON**, 22, of Harlequin Way, Banbury, admitted possession of



Class-B drug cannabis in Springfield Avenue, Banbury, on March 30. Also admitted breaching a non-molestation order in Springfield Avenue, Banbury, on March 30. Community order made and told to do 40 hours of unpaid community work in the next 12 months.

■ **GARY MCFARLANE**, 21, of Evenlode, Banbury, admitted assault in Bridge Street, Banbury, on January 1. Community order made with alcohol treatment and supervision requirements. Told to pay £50 compensation, a £60 victims' surcharge and £40 costs.

■ **BRIAN KRAUS**, 26, of Swallow Close, Bicester, admitted stealing a laptop and headphones worth £250 from The Hawthorns, Banbury, on January 25. Also admitted stealing a mobile phone from Jubilee Court, Banbury, on February 12. Community order made with a seven-week curfew order. Told to pay £250 compensation, a £60 victims' surcharge, and £100 costs.

■ **SITI SHAHRANI**, 29, of Lidstone, Chipping Norton, admitted speeding at 36mph in a 30mph zone in Oxford Road, Enstone, on October 18. Fined £80 and told to pay a £20 victims' surcharge. Licence endorsed with three penalty points.

■ **PATRICIA WOODMAN**, 66, of Laburnum Grove, Banbury, admitted speeding at 38mph in a 30mph zone in Stratford Road, Wroxton, on October 16. Fined £80 and told to pay a £60 victims' surcharge. Licence endorsed with three points.

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Wednesday 23 July Oxford, County Hall



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

■ Hi-tech aid offers advice on where to go for medical help

Smartphone app in bid to ease queues at A&E

A SMARTPHONE app is the latest idea from health chiefs to get residents to choose the right NHS service and ease pressure on accident and emergency services.

Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group has launched a free app for Apple and Android devices to give health advice.

Choose Well Oxfordshire uses GPS technology to find the nearest services, like GPs, and provides contact details and opening times.

The move is part of a long-running county NHS campaign to ensure people go to the right services as demand rises across the health service.

A key pressure point is hospital A&E at Banbury's Horton General Hospital and Oxford's John Radcliffe Hospital.

A&E departments should only be used for the most severe emergencies, but often is attended by those who could be treated by other NHS services.

Rising demand means the time is missing its waiting-time target.

The Government says 95 per cent of patients should be discharged, admitted or transferred within four hours of their arrival.

But county hospitals failed this in 2013/14 and figures for the week ending Sunday, June 1, show 89.1 per cent were seen in this time, 254 out of 2,327.

Just 696 were the most serious emergency admissions and

By Oliver Evans

health leaders have said other cases could be seen by other services.

And planned hospital admissions, involving an overnight stay, rose from 22,312 in 2012/13 to 24,208 in 2013/14.

Experts have said that Oxfordshire has a high proportion of older people because of its relative affluence and are at more risk of complex conditions.

The app asks people to choose self-care, pharmacy, GP, the NHS 111 hotline, minor injury units or A&E's 999 – then provides advice and local information.

It also includes a quiz to test knowledge of which is the right service for certain conditions and injuries.

The Choose Well campaign had previously produced posters and information on its oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk website.

An OCCG spokesman said: "One aim of the app is to ensure that when people do go to A&E, it is only for a genuine accident or emergency – such as a heart attack or serious injury."

Clinical chairman Dr Joe McManners added: "This is an effective and easy-to-use app that advises people on the best health services to use. It then shows exactly where the service is located."

"It is a great asset for anyone who is ill or injured and unsure of the best treatment and where to get it."

The app is compatible with iOS supported devices, those using iOS 5.1 and above, including the iPhone 3GS, and first generation iPads.

Some Android-supported devices running 2.2 and above, can also use the app. It will not run on Windows phones or Kindles.



ABOVE: The new app

LEFT: Dr Joe McManners



Call for health hotline improvement

HEALTH leaders have demanded that response times improve for the NHS 111 hotline in Oxfordshire.

A national target demands 95 per cent of calls to the non-emergency line are answered within 60 seconds, but this was only met in six of the 12 months from last April.

Now budget managers have written to the South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust – the authority which provides the service – with concerns calls are not being answered quickly enough.

It is feared this will see people abandon 111 and visit A&E instead, putting pressure on hospitals.

Oxford Health spokesman Alistair Duncan said calls to 111 had risen as more became aware of the service.

He said: "SCAS has been unable to meet this standard consistently during peaks of high demand, which has meant that someone calling 111 may have had to wait

longer than 60 seconds for their call to be answered. On average, the additional wait is 40 seconds.

"Prolonged call waits may mean that patients requiring help or advice abandon the call and seek help by either calling 999 or visiting an emergency department."

A joint "performance notice" has been issued to SCAS by Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and Oxford Health NHS Foundation Trust.

These are handed to a provider where there are concerns about the services.

In December, ten per cent of callers to the phonenumber waited more than 60 seconds for an answer, with 90 per cent answered within the first minute.

January's calls fell within the 95 per cent target, at 95.2 per cent.

Then in February 94.4 per cent were picked up within the 60 second target, and 92.9 per cent in March.

But this was far worse in April, when the proportion of calls answered in 60 seconds was just 83.8 per cent.

The final year total number of callers who waited more than a minute was 94.4 per cent – below the 95 per cent target.

SCAS refused to release the number of calls answered and not answered within target as "contractual performance details are deemed commercially confidential".

Ambulance service spokesman Michelle Archer said: "Over the past year

demand patterns have changed for 111 and during the past two months, the activity has increased within Oxfordshire.

"The increase in activity is a positive change as it allows people who require urgent health care or advice to receive help in a timely way."

"We regret that on occasions there is an additional wait to answer calls, however we are doing our best to handle the increase in calls during peak times."

"We check the actual demand by hour on a weekly basis to ensure predicted call volumes are as accurate as possible to prevent unexpected increases."

The 111 service opened in Oxfordshire in September 2012 to replace NHS Direct.

County calls are taken in Bicester, which has 197 staff, but another centre in Milton Keynes has been used to deal with demand, an OCCG report said.



InBRIEF

NHS booklet to help parents

■ A NEW booklet has been launched by county NHS leaders to help parents look after their children's health. The "Managing your child's health" booklet from Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group is about everyday health problems. Dr Shelley Segal, a consultant paediatrician, said: "Young children can appear unwell relatively quickly. It is understandable that parents worry. This booklet will be invaluable at highlighting when and where to seek appropriate support and advice for an unwell or injured child." It is available from GP surgeries, pharmacies and children's centres or click on: oxfordshireccg.nhs.uk/your-health/childrens-health

'Green' pledge

■ COUNTY NHS leaders have adopted a strategy for cutting carbon emissions. The governing body of Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group – which makes most NHS funding decisions – has backed the sustainability strategy and action plan. Principles include reducing waste, energy use and use of non-renewable energy sources and training and moving to educate and train staff. Pledges include buying energy-efficient fridges, analysing staff travel patterns, promoting cycling and looking at a car sharing scheme.

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InBRIEF**Young readers need your help**

■ **OXON:** Volunteers are needed to transform children's literacy levels in the county.

Charity Arch is hoping new recruits will provide one-to-one literacy support to primary school students who have fallen behind on their reading.

Each volunteer will support three children, providing two 30-minute sessions each week during term-time.

The charity supports more than 700 children across the region.

Last year, one in eight children in England left primary school with reading levels below expected levels. Visit archoxfordshire.org.uk.

Nominations still welcome

■ **OXON:** Nominations are open for the Oxfordshire Football Association's volunteer of the year award.

The pundit celebrates those who have helped and supported clubs or leagues for more than five years.

It is open to coaches, chairmen, treasurers, club secretaries and groundsmen.

Nominations may be made by email, with forms available to download on the association's website.

Visit oxfordshirefa.com

Council needs your opinions

■ **OXON:** Oxfordshire County Council's contract for its smoking cessation service ends in less than a year and the authority is looking into how it can be changed.

The current contract for the service ends in March 2015.

A consultation has been launched to allow members of the public to comment. Visit consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk by June 20.

School children take important car speed message to the streets

TWENTY is plenty for Middle Barton School pupils, who took part in the Giant Walking Bus campaign to get cars to drive through the village slower.

Armed with home-made 20mph signs, the children from the Church Lane primary school took part in a national campaign to lower speed limits to 20mph around schools and get more families to walk to school.

Olivia Hogan, nine, said "We were trying to encourage people to drive 20mph near the school and park."

Classmate nine-year-old George Allsworth added: "It was important because drivers were going too fast. It made us feel safer."

As well as demanding lower speed limits, the children enjoyed their walk through the village.

Ethan Ashworth, eight, said "It was fun because we kept shouting 'drive at 20mph' and we got to walk around the village."

New payment structure to tackle bed-blocking

CARE firms will get extra cash payments under the latest council plans to keep the elderly out of hospital.

Oxfordshire County Council expects to spend more than £100,000 a year as part of efforts to tackle problems like bed-blocking.

It contracts care homes and firms which support people at home but often places and home workers are not available quickly enough.

It hopes payments of up to £200 per patient will prevent people going into hospital and delays in discharging them when they can leave.

This is called bed-blocking and can lead to delays in A&E and cancellation of planned operations as beds are not available.

The council last year began a pilot which

By Alex Wynick

paid home workers different rates for different days in a bid to tackle chronic problems at weekends.

They were paid £75 from Monday to Wednesday, £100 for Thursdays and Fridays, and £150 for the weekends.

Yet most payments, for 162 people, were from Monday to Friday just 36 over the weekend, when pressure is highest due to lower staffing levels.

Councillors agreed last week that the weekend rate should be raised to £150 on Fridays and £200 the weekend.

Lead commissioner for older people Ann Nurse said: "There is a need to improve the responsiveness and availability of home

support and care home provision across the county.

"This is key to maintaining people's independence in their own homes, preventing hospital admission, and ensuring timely discharge from hospital.

"Incentive payments are one of the few ways of impacting on the market without the lead-in time associated with a tender."

She said: "Since the incentives were introduced, the average waiting time for a home support package has decreased."

And she recommended care homes get the same rates but only in "exceptional circumstances".

The council has estimated the payments will cost about £105,900 a year.

Since 2011, Oxfordshire has been among the country's worst offenders for

bed-blocking.

Latest NHS snapshot survey figures, for April 24, show there were 106 people in Oxfordshire in hospital beds who were well enough to go home.

Sue Kent is the manager at Newland House care home in Witney. She said: "It's about time that they've thought of doing this."

"There are lots of people in hospital that don't need to be there."

"For care homes with empty rooms this will help a lot - £200 is better than a room sitting empty."

Council spokesman Marcus Mabblerley said: "The evidence suggests that the responsiveness of companies to put care in place improved on weekdays and there was also an improvement in pick-ups during the weekend, which is positive."

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County councillor for education dubs free school meal policy 'utter madness'

Making a real meal of it

By Ben Holgate

MORE than half of Oxfordshire's 232 state primary schools require kitchen upgrades to comply with the Government's new free meals policy and 41 have no kitchen at all, including six in the Banbury area.

With less than three months before the program takes effect on September 2, at the start of the new school year, some schools are struggling to make arrangements to feed significantly more students.

One school needs to serve five times the number of meals it does now.

Individual schools and the Oxfordshire County Council have criticised the Government for under-funding the policy, and expect they will have to make up the shortfall out of their own budgets.

Across the county, 123 primary schools – 53 per cent – “require some form of equipment or upgrade to kitchen facilities in order to accommodate the government's offer”, said a spokesman for the Oxfordshire County Council.

This includes 41 primary schools, or 18 per cent of the total, that have no kitchen.

State-funded schools must provide a hot meal each day to all children from reception to year two (aged from four to seven) from next academic year in an attempt to combat under-fed students. But the policy, which was announced by Deputy Prime Minister and Liberal Democrats Leader Nick Clegg last September, has come under attack for its rushed execution.

Jon Gray, headteacher of Cutteslowe Primary School in Oxford, said: “It's a good idea, but there should have been more time to implement it.”

Lynn Knapp, headteacher at Windmill Primary School in Headington, added: “It's not a particularly good use of public money, and it's being rushed so quickly.”

Anna Ballance, headteacher of Southwold School in Bicester, said: “The Government made the decision and imposed a policy without realising the implications for schools and the local authorities.”

Mrs Ballance said she feared her



Headteacher Anna Ballance from Southwold School in Bicester sat with pupils from reception class, eating their packed lunch as there is no facility at the school to provide 150 hot lunches to the pupils; below, Melinda Tilley

school would need to spend up to £4,000 a year for extra administration and lunch supervisors to comply with the policy.

The Government is providing £1.47m to Oxfordshire County Council to help improve kitchens and dining areas.

The council's education head, Councillor Melinda Tilley, described the policy as “utter madness” and warned the total cost could be about £2m.

Not all schools would be able to provide hot meals by the deadline, she added.

Carole Thomson, chairwoman of the Oxfordshire Governors Association, criticised the council for being “very slow off the mark in surveying schools”. The council only began to ask schools about their capacity to feed students in March, she said.



However, Mrs Tilley responded: “The timetable for the announcement and introduction of this policy meant local authorities across the country were given

a very limited amount of time to prepare.”

But Liberal Democrats councillor John Howson defended the scheme.

“A year should be long enough to implement the policy,” he said. “It's going to make a huge difference to schools.”

He added 80 small primary schools in the county would benefit from an additional £3,000 each in Government support for the scheme.

A Department for Education spokesman said: “Universal free school meals have already been shown to work in the pilot schemes run ... in 2009. Indeed, schools have had longer to prepare for the introduction of universal free school meals this September than schools in those pilot areas had.”

Food With Thought, a partnership

The schools with no kitchens

- Bishop Carpenter Church of England Aided Primary School, North Newington
- Frank Wise School, Banbury
- Great Tew Primary School
- Hornton Primary School
- Sherington Church of England Primary School
- St John's Catholic Primary School, Banbury

between the county council and Carillion, supplies meals to 80 per cent of the county's schools.

A spokesman for Food With Thought said: “Where schools require additional equipment or physical upgrades a robust plan is in place to deliver these and we are confident that this will be achieved for the start of September.”

Many schools closed their kitchens a decade or more ago in order to save money or to create space for computer rooms, said Southwold's Mrs Ballance.

Schools serving more meals will likely need to hire more lunchtime supervisors at an additional cost.

The Government requires all state schools to offer a hot meal each day to every child from reception to year two.

The policy, which starts on September 2, is designed to ensure all primary school children up to seven years old are receiving adequate nutrition at school.

The Government is providing £150m to improve school kitchens and dining facilities, plus another £22.5m to help small schools provide the hot meals.

The problem with the current system is that not all children who are eligible for free school meals are claiming them. This might be due to social stigma, lack of knowledge by parents or other reasons.

A Department for Education spokesman said that last year only 11 per cent of Oxfordshire students were claiming school meals, whereas another 21 per cent were entitled to them but did not take up the offer.



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Concert marks First World War



MUSICAL SUPPORT: Banbury Symphony Orchestra in St Mary's Church

By Rachel Bayne

CONCERT-GOERS will raise money for ex-servicemen as part of an event to coincide with Banbury's annual Armed Forces Parade.

The Banbury Symphony Orchestra will perform Music to Honour the Brave 1914-1918 at St Mary's Church on Saturday, June 28.

Funds raised will go to the Royal British Legion and the Army Benevolent Fund.

Emma Gallery, spokeswoman for the orchestra, said: "In future, all of our summer concerts will raise money for local good causes. We have chosen ex-service charities this year because 2014 is the 100th anniversary of the start of the First World War – and it is appropriate that we recognise that and pay tribute to those who fought in the Great War and other conflicts."

The concert has been organised by the town council on the same day as the Armed Forces Parade. The council and the Rotary Club of Banbury have made preparations for this year's parade, which will see hundreds of people line the streets.

A procession, led by the Band of the Royal Logistic Corps, will begin in Banbury's Market Place at 11.30am.

Leader of the council Kieron



UNITED: Banbury's Armed forces Day parade in 2009; left, Kieron Mallon

Mallon said: "This is a wonderful gesture by Banbury Symphony Orchestra. I am sure the

concert will be a success and will raise a large sum of money for two deserving charities."

The concert will start at 7.30pm and tickets cost £10.

For more information on the concert visit: www.banburysymphony.org

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Cloudy2Clear Windows – Service With A Smile!

It's been a crazy few months for Cloudy2Clear Windows. The company which specialises in repairing windows which are steamed up, broken or damaged by replacing the panes – not the frames has grown rapidly as homeowners take advantage of their services.

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that obviously helps. Many tradespeople have struggled since last year and I honestly feel that during the good times a minority perhaps didn't focus on customer care as much as they should have done. We make sure we turn up when we say we will, do the job the customer requires and leave their house as clean as a whistle. I often get comments back from customers on how they really didn't expect that sort of service which, in a way, is very sad for the service industry as a whole."

Cloudy2Clear service the Oxford, Banbury & Abingdon areas and Trevor is finding that his approach is a major factor

in his success. "The truth is that it's not just the personal satisfaction that I get from doing a good job but also it makes good business sense. I get a huge amount of business from friends and family of people I've done work for, which just goes to show

how much a little bit of effort is appreciated."

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JUST FRIENDS Bubbly, fun to be around, 44 year old Milton Keynes female, voluptuous, enjoy 80s music and reading. Would like to meet a gay male for friendship and to share happy, fun times together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 171091

TASTE OF ROMANCE Shy and sincere Bedford-based female, 45, enjoys all the quiet things in life, now searching for a genuine, faithful and sincere man, to build a friendship and loving times together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 172147 or send a text to 80360

MAKE A REAL MATCH Informed, outspoken and stylish Bedford female, 46, would like to meet a tidy, articulate gent, for caring and happy times together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 171327 or send a text to 80360

GENUINE PARTNER WANTED! Sincere, loyal, Christian Banbury female, 46, searching for a loving, kind-hearted and honest man, for friendship initially and hopefully a romantic relationship in the future. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 154128 or send a text to 80360

CATCH A FALLING STAR Caring, loving, loyal, 67 year old Buckingham female, 5'4", curvy, brown eyes, enjoy going to pubs, dancing, music. WILTM a loyal, independent male, for companionship and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 165815

ASK ME OUT! Easy-going, independent, 48 year old Luton female, blonde, blue eyes, love walks, pubs, meals out, positive people, cinema. WILTM a fit positive male, to get to know with views to start a relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 167026 or send a text to 80360

IT COULD BE US Spiritual, genuine Didcot woman, 48, attractive, fun, have grown up children, likes clubs, cafes, music, films, walking and reading, seeking a caring and optimistic man, for friendship first. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 123828 or send a text to 80360

WITH OR WITHOUT YOU Emotional, reliable and sensitive Witney girl, 48, 5'5", just looking to meet an independent, reflective gent, for fun and maybe a little romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 140276

GOOD LUCK CHARM Creative, honest and sincere Hemel Hempstead woman, 49, enjoys cooking, gardening and family life, looking for a cultured, mellow gent, to share the future with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 149032 or send a text to 80360

QUIET AS FIRST Quiet, affectionate, black Luton woman, 49, would like to meet a happy, stable, loving man, for companionship and a little bit of romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 169996 or send a text to 80360

A CURIOUS FEELING Loyal, considerate and sincere Milton Keynes girl, 50, 5'4", brunette, average build and a non-smoker. Looking to find an imaginative, unconventional gent, for love and a honest future together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 169996 or send a text to 80360

MEET AND GREET Slim, honest Milton Keynes female, 50, 5'3", enjoys keeping fit and all the normal things, searching for a decent, romantic man, to share loving times and future happiness. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 172417 or send a text to 80360

BUBBLY WOMAN Bubbly, fun lady, 50, short hair, slim build, blue/green eyes, likes pubs, clubs and riding, looking for a man to build friendship and love. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 152675

FEEL IT COMING NOW Down to earth Chesham female, 52, good sense of humour, seeking a male, 48-56, to share and enjoy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 160626

ONE LOVE Warm-hearted, caring and selfless Aylesbury female, 52, 5'6", searching for an energetic, trustworthy male, good sense of humour a must, for friendship and romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 155653

SIMILAR INTERESTS? Caring, loving, easy-going, 52 year old Witney female, 5'7", slim build, brown hair, blue eyes, good sense of humour, enjoy swimming and dog walking. Seeks a caring male for friendship, fun and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 170647

MAKE A REAL MATCH Informed, outspoken and stylish Bedford female, 46, would like to meet a tidy, articulate gent, for caring and happy times together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 171327 or send a text to 80360

GENUINE PARTNER WANTED! Sincere, loyal, Christian Banbury female, 46, searching for a loving, kind-hearted and honest man, for friendship initially and hopefully a romantic relationship in the future. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 154128 or send a text to 80360

CATCH A FALLING STAR Caring, loving, loyal, 67 year old Buckingham female, 5'4", curvy, brown eyes, enjoy going to pubs, dancing, music. WILTM a loyal, independent male, for companionship and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 165815

ASK ME OUT! Easy-going, independent, 48 year old Luton female, blonde, blue eyes, love walks, pubs, meals out, positive people, cinema. WILTM a fit positive male, to get to know with views to start a relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 167026 or send a text to 80360

IT COULD BE US Spiritual, genuine Didcot woman, 48, attractive, fun, have grown up children, likes clubs, cafes, music, films, walking and reading, seeking a caring and optimistic man, for friendship first. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 123828 or send a text to 80360

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A CURIOUS FEELING Loyal, considerate and sincere Milton Keynes girl, 50, 5'4", brunette, average build and a non-smoker. Looking to find an imaginative, unconventional gent, for love and a honest future together. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 169996 or send a text to 80360

FRIENDSHIP OR MORE Friendly Christian lady, 54, curvy brunette, own car, enjoys indoor and outdoor life, cooking and bowling, looking for someone with similar interests, for friendship and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 150961 or send a text to 80360

ANYONE INTERESTING? Happy, 55 year old Luton female, widow, enjoys holidays and travel, cooking and entertaining. Would like to meet a happy, jolly male, with a good sense of humour, to enjoy evenings in and out. Call 0905 005 2359 or send a text to 80360

SOMETHING LASTING Perceptive, polite and romantic Bampton woman, 57, my children and grandchildren are a huge joy in my life. I would like to find an energetic, consistent man, to share the future with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 167144 or send a text to 80360

A FUTURE FILLED WITH LAUGHTER Bubbly, caring Oxfordshire female, GSOH, searching for a genuine, nice, caring guy, also with a great sense of humour. 5'10" +, med build, for friendship and maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 171086 or send a text to 80360

SEEKING THE RIGHT MAN Separated, attractive Witney female, 62, 5'2", curvy, likes cooking, evenings in/out and much more, seeks friendly male, to enjoy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 128289 or send a text to 80360

LOVE IS FOR SHARING Easygoing, sincere Trowbridge lady, 62, med build, 5'6", GSOH, N/S, enjoys good social life, darts, music, walking & reading, searching for that special guy, N/S and caring for dates & more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 116161

THE WINNER TAKES IT ALL Loyal, caring, artistic Milton Keynes lady, 63, enjoys home life, film, sport and travel, searching for an honest gent, for friendship, shared interests and maybe a little more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 172449 or send a text to 80360

AN ENCHANTED EVENING Intelligent, smartly dressed, 64 year old Witney female, widow, who enjoys socialising, theatre, cinema and holidays. Seeks a male to spend the evenings and weekends with who has similar interests. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 170119



CARING & CONSIDERATE Kind-hearted, active Oxford man, 37, enjoys staying fit, playing sports and fine dining with friends and family, would like to meet a similar female, for companionship and love. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 147790 or send a text to 80360

TIME TO SHARE Lovely Oxford male, 40, 5'10", med build, enjoys motorbikes, clubs, cinema, meals and more, searching for a loving woman, to share friendship and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 117999 or send a text to 80360

TAKE A GAMBLE Active, outgoing, blue-eyed male, 41, 5'10", blond, non smoker, enjoys F1, football, film, heavy metal and more, searching for a lively, attractive, fun female, to start a lasting relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 172376 or send a text to 80360

MUCH MUCH MORE Bright, upbeat and happy Oxfordshire man, 41, with personality, would like a date with a bubbly, tender, warm-hearted girl, to share the good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 161546

PERFECT HARMONY Fun-loving, easygoing and sticky Witney biker, 42, 6ft, tackle build, shaven head and goatee, would like to meet a fun-loving, cheeky lady, to share a happy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 108035

A LUCKY STRIKE Rational, positive and expressive Didcot man, 46, would like to find a funny, helpful female, for a special and lasting relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 161546

LOTS TO OFFER Smart, curious and constructive Oxford male, 47, 6'2", would like to meet an interesting, active girl, to build a lasting, happy future with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 146182

LOOK TO THE FUTURE Jovial, innovative and self-sufficient Reading gent, 47, wants to meet woman, to have fun and who knows. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 157382 or send a text to 80360

AN ENCHANTED EVENING Understanding, caring, 47 year old Oxford male, 5'11", brown hair, blue eyes, enjoys walks in the countryside, old pubs, fitness, sports. Seeks an affectionate female, 40-50, for a relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 170899 or send a text to 80360

COME CLOSER Active, kind-hearted and upbeat Oxford bloke, 47, 6'3", looking to find an insightful, liberal woman, for fun and maybe a little romance. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 130080

HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL Kind, caring, down-to-earth Thame male, 48, enjoys music, country walks, cooking, reading, films, seeking a kind, sincere, slim female, 25+. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 137427

LOVE TO HAVE A LAUGH Hardworking, friendly male, 53, 5'7", brown hair, own flat, likes socialising, cooking, nights in, seeks nice young lady for friendship leading to more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 121027 or send a text to 80360

LOVE THE ONE YOU'RE WITH Friendly, warm-hearted Abingdon male, 52, good sense of humour, would like to meet a caring, well-matured girl, to enjoy good times together. Is you're looking for true love then get in touch. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 115894

SADDE UP Friendly, blue-eyed Oxford male, 53, 5'5", works with horses, seeking a loving and active countrygirl, 40-60, to settle down with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 104741 or send a text to 80360

ALL TO LOVE Kind and caring Oxfordshire male, 54, brown hair, green eyes, GSOH, searching for a nice, genuine girl, for friendship first, then maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 461278

FUN AND ENJOYMENT Kind, caring and reliable, 54 year old Oxford male, like coastal walks, the countryside, animals, eating out, cosy nights in, history, DIY, cooking, seeking a female for a long-term relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 171063 or send a text to 80360

EYE TO EYE Honest, caring, reliable, 54, 5'4", interests are walking, countryside, coastal walks, animals, eating out, cosy nights in, F1, cooking, DIY, history, architecture, looking for a LTR. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 152776 or send a text to 80360

TAKE CHARGE Bright, humorous and optimistic Banbury man, 56, would like a date with a chatty, active woman, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 132836

MAKE A DATE Young-at-heart, blue-eyed Wallingford man, 58, good sense of humour, enjoys dancing, would like to meet a friendly lady, to get to know each other and see where that leads to. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 159203 or send a text to 80360

SHARING GOOD TIMES Upbeat Bedford widower, 59, own cars, works full time, likes days in and out, countryside walks, driving, looking for a similar woman for companionship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 117916 or send a text to 80360

PASSION FLOWER Creative, instinctive and sympathetic Watlington man, 60, looking for an approachable, helpful female, to share the future with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 101122 or send a text to 80360

CARING NATURE Friendly, adventurous and vibrant Witney male, 60, would like to meet a bubbly, observant lady, for good times, great company and maybe more if there is a spark. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 111595

COME ALIVE Happy, helpful and resilient Bampton / Burford / Carterton man, 68, 6', slim-build, likes playing bowls, home life, seeking an easygoing female, for good times and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 160696 or send a text to 80360

KEEPING WITH THE TIMES Happy go lucky, blue-eyed Banbury man, 61, 5'6", slim build, likes gardening, cinema side and meals out, travel, countryside and 60s music, seeks genuine lady, for friendship maybe more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 156014 or send a text to 80360

LOCAL LADY? Polite, honest, genuine, 61, year old Wallingford male, 6ft, widower, wear glasses, like staying in, going out, movies and weekends away. Seeks a nice, honest female for company and friendship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 173013 or send a text to 80360

LOVE TO HAVE A LAUGH Hardworking, friendly male, 53, 5'7", brown hair, own flat, likes socialising, cooking, nights in, seeks nice young lady for friendship leading to more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 121027 or send a text to 80360

LOVE THE ONE YOU'RE WITH Friendly, warm-hearted Abingdon male, 52, good sense of humour, would like to meet a caring, well-matured girl, to enjoy good times together. Is you're looking for true love then get in touch. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 115894

DECISION IS YOURS Honest, easygoing Yorkshire man (living in Banbury, 61, 5'6", slim build, self employed, likes gardening, cooking, cinema, travel, countryside, seeks genuine lady, to share life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 140930

FUN AND LAUGHTER Honest, sensitive and decent Oxford man, 61, would like to find a warm-hearted, genuine, caring woman, to share laughing and enjoy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 145981

POSITIVE ATTITUDE Fit Latino male, 62, looking for someone who can share fun, life in general and hopefully love with. Oxford. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 460522

SCRUBS UP WELL! Optimistic, positive, 62 year old male, I'm active with a good sense of humour. Having diverse interests and still scrubbing up well, seeking an attractive lady who is also active and enjoys life. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 161846 or send a text to 80360

SOUND LIKE YOUR MATCH? Tall, handsome, fit Abingdon male, 63, slim build, enjoys DIY, gardening, travel and walking, seeking a slim, petite, adventurous female, for good company and to enjoy a happy life with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 159314

SO GOOD TOGETHER Genuine, easygoing, happy Abingdon male, 63, own home/car, enjoys dancing, days out and walking the dog, searching for a genuine lady with an attractive and happy nature. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 466085

FAMILY LIFE Well educated male, 59, I live in Oxford. I'm an active guy and run my own business. I have children and grand children. Interests: music/comedy. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 455368

MORE IN TIME Thoughtful, kind, self-employed Witney male, 45, loves cinema, theatre, eating out and more, searching for a serious-minded lady, for a loving and supportive relationship. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 109413 or send a text to 80360

LOVING LIFE Loyal, solvent North Oxfordshire gent, 68, 5'9", loves soul and motown music, coffee and theatre, searching for an attractive, interesting lady, 50-65, to share and explore interesting times. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 104998

A FRIEND INDEED Semi-retired Oxford male, 68, 6', slim-build, likes playing bowls, home life, seeking an easygoing female, for good times and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 137812

LONG LASTING HAPPINESS Solvent, retired business gent, North Oxfordshire, 68, own home and car etc, with a love of cinema, travel and new adventure, seeks a nice, loyal, feminine lady, for companionship then who knows? Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 132140

OPEN YOUR HEART Cheerful, slim Banbury male, 71, 5'6", GSOH, likes sport, walks, animals and cosy evenings in, searching for a decent, positive lady, to settle down with and share a happy future. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 104901 or send a text to 80360

NICE DAYS AHEAD Easygoing, smoking Abingdon widower, 72, 5'9", enjoys travel, pub meal and car boot sales, would like to meet a nice non-smoking lady, to settle down with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 116036 or send a text to 80360

SEE FOR YOURSELF Youthful, faithful, liberal and sympathetic Middlesbrough man, 73, looking for a sweet, sensitive woman, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 141502 or send a text to 80360

SOUL TO SOUL Fun, talkative and friendly Oxford guy, 79, likes social drinks from time to time, just hoping to meet a bubbly, confident lady, to build a loving, lasting relationship with. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 100937



SAIL AWAY Sociable, bubbly and happy Bicester female, 42, seeking a chatty, optimistic female, for good times and great company. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 147448 or send a text to 80360

ANYONE? Young-at-heart, 66 year old Luton female, would like to meet a female of a similar age for friendship and to go on holiday together this year. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 170118 or send a text to 80360



IT'S YOUR MOVE Outgoing, energetic and warm-hearted Oxford male, 42, likes nights out, pubs, clubs, live music and loads more, simply searching for an outgoing, older man, for fun times, laughter and lots more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 103263 or send a text to 80360

MADE FOR EACH OTHER Happy-go-lucky Abingdon-On-Thames male, 48, 5'9", medium build, short hair, likes walks, cinema, social drink, quiet pubs, seeks a nice woman, for friendship and hopefully more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 166651 or send a text to 80360

THAT'S ALL FOR NOW... Easygoing, friendly Didcot male, 67, enjoys walks, theatre, cosy times in, socialising, seeks a friendly, active chap, for company and more. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 131800 or send a text to 80360

LET'S EXPLORE Abingdon male, 70, 5'9", medium build, easygoing and affectionate, looking for someone similar, to share fun and good times. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 453567 or send a text to 80360

TWO'S COMPANY
24-years your Trusted LOCAL Dating service in
Banbury Cake

START LIVING AGAIN Friendly, fun Oxfordshire divorced man, 53, 5'7", grown up children, looking for love again and someone to share life with. Is the right man out there for me? Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 798804

ARE YOU MY MAN? Sincere, 54 year old Bedford lady, 5'3", brunette, slim, enjoy eating in and out, walks, places of interest and swimming. Would like to meet a genuine male, aged 55-58, for friendship and love. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 173512 or send a text to 80360

START LIVING INDEPENDENT Sincere, 54 year old Bedford lady, 5'3", brunette, slim, enjoy eating in and out, walks, places of interest and swimming. Would like to meet a genuine male, aged 55-58, for friendship and love. Call 0905 005 2359 and enter box number 173512 or send a text to 80360

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HOPE TO HEAR FROM YOU Friendly, kind and caring Bedford female, 54, attractive, 5'2", cuddly, enjoys theatre, historical places, seaside

An enchanting drama of prejudice and power

BELLE (12A, 104 minutes)
Drama/Romance. Gugu Mbatha-Raw, Sam Reid, Tom Wilkinson, Emily Watson, Sarah Gadon, Miranda Richardson, Tom Felton, James Norton, Matthew Goode, Alex Jennings, Penelope Wilton, Lauren Julien-Box, Cara Jenkins. Director: Amma Asante.

BEAUTY is in the eye of the beholder but when that beauty defies the social mores of a prejudiced era, it must be cherished in secret.

Belle is dramatisation of a true story of fortitude across racial and class divides at a time when pompous men of privilege were vociferously debating the end of slavery in England.

The high-profile case at the centre of the debate concerns the crew of a ship called the *Zong*, who have thrown dozens of slaves overboard claiming they were short of supplies.

When the ship reaches port, the *Zong*'s Liverpool-based owners demand compensation for the lost slaves but insurers refuse to honour the claim.

The subsequent trial poses uncomfortable questions about the monetary value of human life.

Inspired by an 18th-century painting commissioned by William Murray, who was then Lord Chief Justice of England and Wales, Amma Asante's handsome period piece illuminates the debate and some of the characters, whose lives intersect

at this historical crossroads.

Captain Sir John Lindsay (Matthew Goode) brings his illegitimate, mixed race daughter Dido (Lauren Julien-Box) to England and entrusts the child to his aristocratic uncle, Lord Mansfield (Tom Wilkinson).

Lord Mansfield's wife (Emily Watson) opposes the plan but permits Dido to stay, allowing his great-niece to become a constant companion to her cousin, Elizabeth (Cara Jenkins).

The girls blossom and Lady Elizabeth (now played by Sarah Gadon) prepares to seek a wealthy husband.

Dido (now played by Gugu Mbatha-Raw) is afforded certain privileges by her lineage but must remain behind closed doors at important social gatherings.

Oliver Ashford (James Norton), offspring of Lord and Lady Ashford (Alex Jennings, Miranda Richardson) is a potential love match for Elizabeth but is more interested in Dido.

However, Dido's head is turned by idealistic lawyer John Davinier (Sam Reid), who is heavily involved in the *Zong* case and opens her eyes to the barbarism of slavery.

Elegantly scripted by Misan Sagay, *Belle* is a beautifully crafted companion piece to *12 Years A Slave* that traverses a moral maze through British eyes and reminds us that we have blood on our hands too.

The ensemble cast delivers excellent performances, particularly Mbatha-Raw, who possesses beauty and vulnerability on camera.



Gugu Mbatha-Raw as Dido Elizabeth Belle and Sam Reid as John Davinier in *Belle*

She catalyses screen chemistry with Reid, and Wilkinson brings pomp to his role as a man with the power to chip away the foundations of the legal firmament.

Dramatic momentum builds to Lord Mansfield's deliberation on the *Zong* case, watched intently by Dido and Davinier.

Like them, we're spellbound by his ruling.

CakeWhat's on

Music

FRIDAY: Deddington Church, Church Street, Deddington: Jazz and Jam. A selection of music from Sweet Chorus, a tribute to Stefan Grappelli and the Hot Club of France, plus Stekpanna and Friends. 8pm. The Deddington Festival. £10.

SATURDAY: Lampit Arms, Tadmarten, Banbury: Backin4. Four-piece mixed covers band. Free. 9pm. 01295 780070.

Lucy Plackett Playing Field, Round Close Road, Adderbury: Party in the Park. A mini-music festival for all ages. 12.30-11.30pm. Admission by invited donation. 01295 522505.

SUNDAY: The Theatre, Spring Street, Chipping Norton: Bella Hardy 30 for 30 Tour. Winner of BBC Radio 2 Folk Singer of The Year award. 7.45pm. £15, concession £13. 01608 642350.

Theatre

The Mill Arts Centre, Spiceball Park, Spiceball Park Road, Banbury:

Jun 20, Elio Pace; Performs The

Billy Joel Song Book. . 8pm. £18.

Jun 21, Absolution. 8pm. £13 (standing event). High-energy show, featuring three top musicians.

Box office: 01295 279002.

The Theatre, Spring Street, Chipping Norton:

Jun 20, *Jonny and The Baptists*.

Musical comedians present a raucous hour of songs, satire and silliness delivered with a trademark combination of joyful energy and razor-sharp scepticism about the world in general. £12. 7.45pm.

Jun 21, *The Hysterical Historical Show*. Cult theatre company, comedy duo LipService return to their stand up roots.

7.45pm. £15, child £13.

Jun 22, Bella Hardy, Thirty for 30 tour. Celebrating her birthday, embarking on an adventure at 30 of her favourite venues with band The Midnight Watch. £15, concession £13. 7.45pm.

Jun 27, The Temperance Seven. Who could have predicted that a band, which hit the top of the charts in 1961 with a song and style that were already 50 years out of date, would still be around in

2014, still revelling in the exuberant sound of 1920s' jazz. The current lineup carry on the sound, the hilarious deadpan tomfoolery, and the sartorial elegance of The Temperance Seven. 7.45pm. £16, concession £14.

Box office: 01608 642350.

The Windmill Centre, Hempton Road, Deddington:

Jun 19, Cotswold Comedy Club brings together three professional comedians from the world of stand-up comedy to rural Oxfordshire. You might not have seen them on TV, but they will make you laugh: Andrew Bird, Laura Lexx and Dave Arnold. Three comedians, for just £10! 8pm. Part of The Deddington Festival.

Jun 22, Komedy of Errors by Circus Berzerkus. A mad-cap family circus show. Starring Gerald the gentleman juggler and Wallace the circus trainee. The show contains music, dazzling juggling, daring unicycling, mystifying magic and hilarious comedy...audience participation required. Part of The Deddington Festival. £8, child £5. 5-6.30pm.

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Banbury held to a draw



Jonny Banbury, on the front foot during his innings of 56 for Banbury
OX67866

ASTON Rowant's last pair hung on to deny Banbury victory in a Serious Cricket Home Counties Premier League Division 1 match of fluctuating fortunes at White Post Road on Saturday.

Rowant finished on 165-9 in reply to the home side's 210-9, but for much of the game looked like taking the leaders to the wire. Indeed with 14 overs left, Rowant required 57 for victory with six wickets in hand.

But the fall of four quick wickets – including three batsmen in quick succession to spinner Luke Ryan for ducks – meant that Richard Cook and last man Chris Leaney had to play out the last nine for a draw.

Banbury, put into bat, were struggling at 62-3 after Nathan Hawkes was run out by Miles Hammond.

But Johnny Cater (56) and Richard West (48) then shared in a fourth wicket partnership of 57.

Ed Phillips and Cater then added 49 runs for the fifth wicket.

With England Under 19 international Hammond taking four wickets, Banbury struggled to accelerate the scoring.

And only a late flourish from Dean Bartlett and Ashley Blanchard took them to 210-9 from their 64 overs.

The visitors' innings was reduced by two overs because of a delay for rain before the game and so they had only 54 overs to get the runs.

Banbury keeper Cater had to come off after being hit on the head in the first over of Rowant's reply, but Ed Phillips took over behind the stumps and made a spectacular catch to see off Tim

Morgan. Cater later returned.

Fellow opener Ricky Hopwood and Chris Watling (52) put on 75 for the second wicket before falling to the off-spin of Jimmy Phillips (4-44).

Josh Smith and Watling

maintained the momentum and with Hammond and Smith going well, Rowant were in with a chance of victory.

But then Ryan struck his three quick blows to set up the tense finish.

SCORECARD

BANBURY		ASTON ROWANT	
L Sabin c Smith b Needham	18	T Morgan c E Phillips b Manley	5
C Haupt b Penhale	11	R Hopwood c Cater b J Phillips	29
R West c Hopwood b Muttitt	48	C Watling c Blanchard b J Phillips	52
N Hawkes run out	7	J Smith b Phillips	34
J Cater c Muttitt b Hammond	56	M Hammond c Haupt b Bartlett	16
E Phillips c Watling b Hammond	17	R Cook not out	16
I Ryan run out	0	W Morrick c Cater b J Phillips	4
A Blanchard not out	13	A Muttitt lbw Ryan	0
D Bartlett b Hammond	21	T Needham c Hawkes b Ryan	0
L Manley b Hammond	0	K Penhale c West b Ryan	0
Extras	19	C Leaney not out	0
Total (9 wks, 64 ovs)	210	Extras	9
Fall: 1-29, 2-38, 3-62, 4-119, 5-168, 6-169, 7-183, 8-210, 9-210.		Total (9 wks, 54 ovs)	165
Bowling: Morrick 21-6-40-0, Penhale 12-2-44-1, Needham 6-0-21-1, Hammond 18-1-74-4, Muttitt 7-0-20-1.		Fall: 1-8, 2-83, 3-112, 4-144, 5-146, 6-158, 7-159, 8-161, 9-165.	
		Bowling: Bartlett 10-1-31-1, Manley 9-1-30-1, Blanchard 3-1-10-0, Ryan 13-4-33-3, J Phillips 17-4-44-4, West 2-0-13-0.	
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ARIES Mar 21-Apr 19

Mercury the planet of travel and communication is dictating that your working day becomes a longer one than you are used to, but try not to get too despondent as this is unlikely to be a permanent situation. It is the key however to getting out of a financial predicament. Ring now to hear why house moves may soon be written in the stars for many of you rams.

0906 585 4360

LIBRA Sep 23-Oct 22

You think you should be embarrassed about all that recently occurred but you need to remember that courage, love and wisdom have and will continue to survive. These are the things which will enable you to enter the next and most productive phase of your life to date Libra. Return all phone calls. Someone has an important message for you. Ring now to hear why it's worth sticking to plans this weekend.

0906 585 4366

TAURUS Apr 20-May 20

The chance to enjoy many new experiences in your work may come at a personal price, but only you can weigh up the pros and cons. You need to apply yourself this week to switching off from work when you're not there. It's the key to you taking a relationship to the next level. Lies you tell this weekend come back on you, so try to stick to truths. Ring now to make the most of your stars.

0906 585 4361

SCORPIO Oct 23-Nov 21

For a sign who usually acts on their instincts, you are playing pretty safe lately Scorpio. That can only mean one thing. You've been burnt. Stop licking your wounds and start pushing forward. The only way to make a future is to stop living in the past. Unexpected visitors midweek give you the inspiration you've needed to deal with all that's gone on. Ring now so I can help you.

0906 585 4367

GEMINI May 21-Jun 20

A new routine which is forced upon you is actually a blessing in disguise as it gives you the chance to see how well you cope under pressure. Don't tell tales on those you work with on Thursday or Friday. The stars show you will need their support in the not too distant future, so treat them as you'd wish to be treated in yourself. Ring now to hear how Mars eases financial pressures at last.

0906 585 4362

SAGITTARIUS Nov 22-Dec 21

You've stopped taking yourself seriously recently, but you need to start trying. You see Sagittarius, there are many faces around you right now who are ready, willing and able to help you if you can grant yourself the self respect you usually pride yourself in having. A great week to buy and invest in things. You're likely to get a good return. Ring now to hear how the Moon promises a confession.

0906 585 4368

CANCER Jun 21-Jul 22

News you receive about your work will see your spirits soaring before Tuesday, but don't forget to see things through if you want to ensure success. This is one time when cutting corners cannot and will not be an option. Jealousy in relationships is becoming a problem. Arrange a heart to heart before Friday to clear the air. Ring now to hear why I'm so optimistic about love this month.

0906 585 4363

CAPRICORN Dec 22-Jan 19

When you forgive someone, it can feel great to move on. There are times however, when it can feel like you are compromising your self respect and beliefs. Which one applies to you this week? That depends on how much you think of yourself right now. What you should know my friend, is that I believe you should ask for and expect the best in life. Ring now for a confidence boost.

0906 585 4369

LEO Jul 23-Aug 22

As this week progresses, you get a clearer picture of who your real friends and allies are in the workplace. This is a good thing, but it doesn't mean you need to let them know that you are on to their game. Having this information can benefit you, so don't share it unnecessarily. Leo, Aries hold a secret you should know. Ring to hear why it's worth dressing well in the next seven days.

0906 585 4364

AQUARIUS Jan 20-Feb 18

Stop wasting time with those you know can never really give you back what you put in. Those of you thinking about changing your career need to be aiming higher. Start at the top when going for job interviews and seeking new paths. The planets line up to ensure your entrance will not be forgotten in a hurry. Ring now to hear how Mercury brings travel, fun and lasting memories.

0906 585 4370

VIRGO Aug 23-Sep 22

You can't seem to see the wood for the trees with the many problems which have been affecting your life recently. From Sunday, you get a clearer sense of who and what is responsible for the problems which have been in your way. You also decide what to do to ensure they won't be able to cause difficulties again. Ring now to hear why this is a great week for interviews and contracts.

0906 585 4365

PISCES Feb 19-Mar 20

Not only have you managed to worm your way out of a commitment that you know you should have honoured, but you also seem to have convinced those around you that you may have been in the right too. Know how far is too far to go Pisces, before you lose support and respect.

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Zippy Mazda hatch sports sleek style

By David Duffy

Very few people know that just across the loading bay from our £25m Oxford press hall sits a 9,900,000-litre sprinkler tank — but the satellite navigation system on the new Mazda3 does.

The appearance of the perfectly-rendered 3D image is a small, if surprising, feature, but neatly illustrates the attention to detail that pervades every aspect of the new hatchback.

First, its swoopy styling looks great and the interior is classy, well-made and oozes quality thanks to the liberal use of satin-chromed metal, soft-touch plastics and leather. It is also packed with equipment and the latest technology, including a jet fighter-style head-up display of speed, turn-by-turn navigation and vehicle warnings.

But all of that pales into insignificance once you get behind the wheel, for the Mazda3 with its cosy cockpit delivers a simply superb driving experience.

The lighter, stiffer chassis and sophisticated suspension strikes a beautiful balance between absorbent comfort and sharp body control. Slot in the zippy 165 horsepower, 2.0-litre petrol engine, and you have a spacious, versatile family hatchback with the chubbability of a taut-handling sports car.

Prices start at about £17,000 for

the 36-strong range, with a choice of petrol or diesel engines, and standard equipment including 16-inch alloy wheels, air conditioning, seven-inch colour touchscreen, iPod connectivity and Bluetooth hands-free system.

All models also come with a laser-based city braking system to cut the risk of low-speed bumps in town, along with a secondary collision reduction system that automatically switches on the brake and hazard lights if the airbags are deployed in a crash, to help cut the risk of a secondary collision occurring.

Move up to the Sport Nav test model, at the top of the five-specification range, and the mix of technology becomes positively alluring.

The car now sits on 18-inch alloy wheels and the instrumentation is dominated by the large, centrally-mounted rev counter, with a smaller digital speed display nestling along-



TOP FLIGHT: The Mazda3 was on European Car of the Year list

side it. Keyless entry, follow-the-road headlights, front and rear parking sensors and a nine-speaker Bose audio system add to the comfort.

A new smartphone app also allows the car to bring free web-based content into the car via the seven-inch dash-top display.

Safety equipment, too, is first rate, with a string of systems from anti-lock braking and emergency brake assist to stability control, in addition to the crash-prevention systems already mentioned, contributing to the car's five-star safety rating in the latest Euro NCAP tests.

The car was a deserved contender for the title of 2014 European Car of the Year.

Auto facts

Model: Mazda3 2.0 Sport Nav
Price: £21,620
Insurance group: 22 (1-50)
Fuel consump (Combined): 48.7mpg
Top speed: 130mph
Length: 446cm/175.6in
Width: 179.5cm/70.7in
Luggage capacity: 12.8 cu ft
Fuel tank capacity: 11.2 gallons/51 litres
CO₂ emissions: 135g/km
Warranty: Three years/60,000 miles

F1testingnews

F1 fans given opportunity to get up close

SILVERSTONE is gearing up for a double-dose of F1 action in July, after details of the 2014 Formula One Team Test were announced.

The official full team test, featuring all eleven teams, will take place on July 8 and 9, just two days after this year's Formula 1 Santander British Grand Prix, which will be held from Friday, July 4, to Sunday, July 6.

Running out of The Wing Pit and Paddock complex, teams and drivers will test their cars around the Grand Prix circuit and are permitted to run as often or as little as they need

during the two days.

The International Pits Straight grandstand will be open for all fans to watch the action and this is included in the ticket price.

Silverstone will be hosting a Pit Walk on both the Tuesday and Wednesday evening after the testing activity, beginning at approximately 5.15pm.

This will be for ticket holders only and will provide fans a chance to get up close with the teams and their cars in the international pit lane.

A spokesman for the circuit said: "Please note that not all cars

are guaranteed to turn a wheel and there will be no timetable for this test."

Single day tickets for the 2014 Formula One Team Test are available from £25 per person in advance; accompanied children under-15 go free.

A two-day ticket, for Tuesday and Wednesday, is available in advance at £40.

Pit walk tickets are priced at £10 for each day.

Visit the circuit's website www.silverstone.co.uk for more information or call 0844 3728 300 for more information.

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Wheelsanddeals

■ **SEVEN** out of the top 10 vehicles in the 2014 *What Car?*/JD Power survey are made by German-owned car manufacturers, with the top three all made by the Volkswagen Group. The car with the highest overall rating and the winner of the city car category is the Volkswagen Up, *What Car?*'s Car of the Year 2012. Second was the VW Golf Plus, followed by the Skoda Yeti. Jaguar and Lexus are joint top manufacturers this year.

■ **VOLKSWAGEN** has taken another step forward with the introduction of standard-fit electronic stability control and DAB digital radio on all of its passenger car models in the UK, in every 2015 model-year VW from the up! to the Phaeton.

■ **FASHION** consultant, author and TV personality Gok Wan has taken delivery of a Vauxhall Ampera extended-range electric vehicle. Prices for the Ampera start at £28,750.

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